

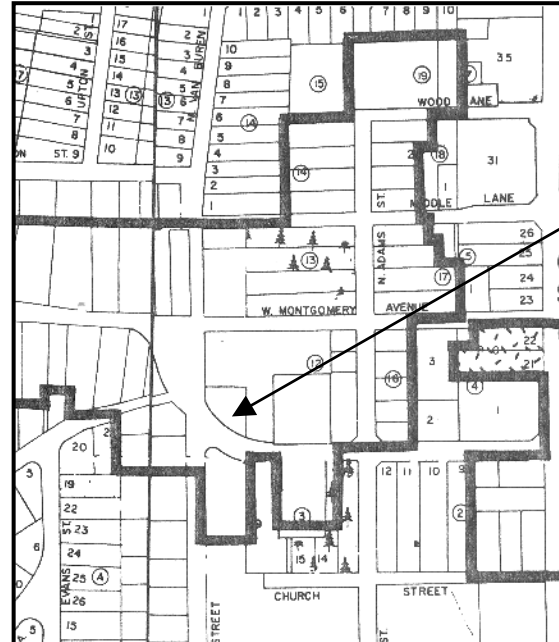
**CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT**

**January 16, 2003  
MEETING NO. 01-03**

**APPLICATION:** HDC02-0230

**DATE FILED:** December 26, 2002

**APPLICANT/  
OWNER:** Peerless Rockville  
P.O. Box 4262  
Rockville, MD 20850



Subject

**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:** The Old Baptist Cemetery is situated on a roughly pie-shaped parcel on West Jefferson Street, across from its intersection with South Van Buren Street. The cemetery is a contributing resource to the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District.

**PREVIOUS ACTIONS AT THIS ADDRESS:**

HD-182-87	Restore cemetery, approved 7/21/87
CAV98-08105	Defective wooden fence surrounding cemetery
HDC98-0136	Install identifying sign, approved 1/20/99
SGN99-01891	Sign permit, approved 2/12/99
HDC01-0204	Landscape bench, staff approved 9/26/01
HDC02-0218	Tree removal, staff approved 5/22/02

**REQUEST:** The Applicant requests a Certificate of Approval to remove the deteriorated wood reproduction fence around the cemetery and erect a new aluminum fence, gate, and donor plaque. The proposed black Jerith fence style is identified as “Lexington with Majestic Finials and Ball Caps” to closely match the existing iron fence surrounding the Bouic family plot within the cemetery.



Lexington with Majestic Finials & Ball Caps



Existing wood picket fence

***1. Historic, archeological, or architectural value and significance of the site or structure and its relationship to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding area.***

The property is a relic of the Bethel Baptist congregation in Rockville which built a church and designated a burial ground in 1823 on one-half acre of land at this intersection. A brick church replaced the original church in 1864, which was demolished in 1914. The cemetery was conveyed to the Montgomery County Historical Society in 1973. Peerless Rockville Historic Preservation, LTD accepted ownership and care of the cemetery in 1983. It is a contributing resource to the original character of a mixed residential streetscape and neighborhood in an era when schools, churches and businesses were located within walking distance of the community served.

***2. The relationship of the exterior architectural features of the structure to the remainder of the entire structure and to the surrounding area.***

Wooden picket and wrought iron fences were popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and are recommended by the Rockville Historic District Commission's "Guidelines for Historic Property Owners – Fencing" as appropriate to the historic districts. The existing wood picket fence was installed in 1988 as a reproduction of the original fence at the Baptist church and cemetery. The black aluminum fence proposed for the perimeter of the cemetery has the appearance and design of a wrought iron fence, even though a modern material will be used. The proposed fence does not exceed the City's height restrictions for standard and corner lots. The fence will reduce the potential for vandalism and property damage by discouraging cut-through pedestrian traffic and minimize maintenance without impairing the historic integrity of the cemetery.

***3. The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.***



Fence surrounding Bouic family plot at  
Old Baptist Cemetery

The proposed fence is compatible with the existing design, scale, proportions and textures of the historic elements of the cemetery, including the design of the existing fence around the Bouic family plot within the cemetery. It will allow greater visibility of the cemetery from the right-of-way than the existing wood picket fence.

The gate will be in approximately the same location as the existing gate on West Jefferson Street and will match the style of the new fence. Twenty feet of the wood picket fence will be retained and moved to the east end of the property to help hide the dumpster and to provide some interpretation of the original 19<sup>th</sup> century picket fence that is shown on the cemetery's historic plaque nearby.

***4. To any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent.***

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of HDC02-0230 based on the findings above. Approval is subject to the following conditions:**

1. The Applicant must apply for and received a fence permit from the City of Rockville before proceeding.
2. The fence must be totally erected on the owner's property.
3. The design for donor plaque must be submitted to the HDC staff for approval.